



OFFICE OF ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER

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Treasurer Frerichs Awards Illinois Leaders in Honor of Black History Month

Frerichs Recognizes Great Achievements of African Americans in Illinois

SPRINGFIELD – In honor of Black History Month, Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs today kicked off a virtual campaign to highlight and celebrate the achievements of African Americans in Illinois. This year’s national theme is **The Black Family: Representation, Identity and Diversity**.

“We are proud to celebrate Black History Month and honor the unsung heroes doing impactful work quietly within their communities,” Frerichs said. “These leaders are creating jobs, educating our youth, and breaking down barriers to lead to a more equitable Illinois. We must continue to uplift and support those working hard to make things better for all.”

Frerichs will honor the following recipients for their outstanding commitment to their Illinois communities:

Outstanding Commitment in Arts and Humanity

Kathryn Harris, Community Leader, **Springfield**

Outstanding Service in Business

Max Russell, Owner, Russell Electric Contractors, **Metropolis**

Outstanding Commitment in Community Service

Carlos Nelson, Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation, **Chicago**

Outstanding Commitment in Education

Dr. Sharon Desmoulin Kherat, Superintendent Peoria Public Schools District 150, **Peoria**

Outstanding Commitment as an Elected Official

Senator Jacqueline “Jacqui” Collins, **Chicago**

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Outstanding Commitment in Labor

George Alexander, LIUNA Laborers 477, **Springfield**

Outstanding Service in Leadership

Leslie J. Anderson, BMO Financial Group, **Chicago**

Outstanding Commitment in Sports

Darrin Jackson, Chicago White Sox, **Chicago**

Throughout the month of February, Frerichs will share pre-recorded video conversations with each awardee via his [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts. These videos will also be hosted online at illinoistreasurer.gov/heritageevents.

Black History Month is a national effort. In 1926, Carter G. Woodson created Negro History Week. In 1976, the annual celebration was expanded to a month.

About the Treasurer

As Illinois State Treasurer, Frerichs is the state's Chief Investment and Banking Officer and actively manages approximately \$37 billion. The portfolio includes \$16 billion in state funds, \$15 billion in retirement and college savings plans and \$6 billion on behalf of local and state governments. The investment approach is cautious to ensure the preservation of capital. Frerichs' office protects consumers by safeguarding more than \$3.5 billion in unclaimed property, encouraging savings plans for college or trade school, increasing financial education among all ages, assisting people with disabilities save without losing government benefits, and removing barriers to a secure retirement. The Treasurer's Office predates Illinois incorporation in 1818. Voters in 1848 chose to make it an elected office.

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